

Hi my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and this is the 8<sup>th</sup> principle minute. With the adoption of the 8th Principle, our congregation committed to dismantle racism, beginning within our walls.

As we work to dismantle racism in our institution, we are continuing our exploration of the attributes of White Supremacy Culture. Today we will look at paternalism.

Paternalism is deeply ingrained in our society, with power concentrated in a small minority comprised largely of mature, white males. Even when progressive goals are set, organizational structures still concentrate power in the hands of the few. Efforts to do “the right thing” are frequently characterized by white-centering and white male savior narratives. In such an environment the decision-making process is transparent to those in power and opaque to those without power. People in power believe they are capable of making decisions for those without power and don’t see the necessity of gaining the perspective of those impacted by decisions.

Those with power are often unaware of power imbalances, while those without power are never free of that knowledge. With that said, we saw paternalistic White Supremacy in full display at the confirmation hearings for Ketanji Brown Jackson. An overly qualified candidate's credentials were questioned in a way that would not have happened with a male candidate. It was clear that those wielding their power were aware of the imbalance, and Judge Jackson was certainly aware of the patronizing attitude of those “questioning” her. In the end she was confirmed and we do need to celebrate that.

Antidotes for this are about transparency in decision making and inclusive decision making processes:

- Ensure that everyone knows who makes decisions in the organization and how they are made
- Ensure that decision-making processes are inclusive and consultative, requiring engagement with marginalized groups and granting those groups authority and agency.
- To overcome history and institutional inertia, grant power to BIPOC, women, and, especially, youth.

Together we will continue this journey toward spiritual wholeness, build a beloved community, educate ourselves and discuss what it means to develop a culture of being accountably anti-racist. We will continue to look at our own practices, identity, and stories with a new lens to dismantle the racism in ourselves and our institutions.

<https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/characteristics.html>

[https://www.thc.texas.gov/public/upload/preserve/museums/files/  
White\\_Supremacy\\_Culture.pdf](https://www.thc.texas.gov/public/upload/preserve/museums/files/White_Supremacy_Culture.pdf)